

Topic Group— How to Grow/Housing?

October 9, 2000

Two citizens attended the topic group on housing. They had different perspectives on the role of the County. One felt the County had an obligation to “manage” growth, while the other emphasized that the County should not “control” growth. Notes from the discussion follow.

Attendees:

Glenn Tribe, homeowner

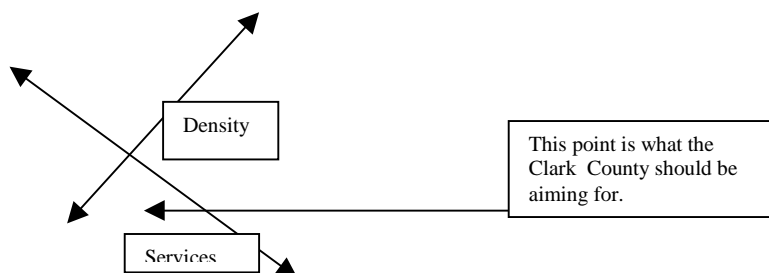
Mike Haggerty, Homeowner and C-TRAN employee

Derek Chisholm, Clark County Planning

Sandie Hillman, Facilitator, Jeanne Lawson Associates, Inc.

Key Points from discussion of density and providing a variety of housing:

- Recognize that 60/40 and 6/16 does not work for small communities. Participants did not have an alternative to these ratios, but made some good points during the discussion.
- Look for a “place of equilibrium” between density and the cost of services to determine what density should be.



- Plan for the “end state”, not 20 years. Planning should be for at least 50 years.
- Recognize that most of the planning for land within the UBA is behind the curve. The real opportunity is for planning in the Urban Reserve Areas.
- One participant noted that suburban densities of 4, 5 and even 6 homes per acre could not support the infrastructure. The issue of affordability is critical.
- UGA boundaries should be allowed to expand for communities that have met the density and housing goals. A community that has run out of land because of poor planning and not complying with goals should not be allowed to expand their UGA boundaries.
- Provide financial incentives to the developers to stimulate building that meets the density and housing goals. These incentives should help to guarantee the builders that they will profit as much from the housing that the County wants as they would from building what they perceive the market wants.
- Currently, residential and commercial developers are being asked to pay for the infrastructure when they build. The County should find another way to provide that infrastructure to entice developers to bring diverse housing and jobs to Clark County.

- An example of a return on incentives: When a developer plans a community where half of the children can walk to school long term transportation savings can be significant. It might be worth the County “looking the other way” on other concurrency issues to achieve this savings.
- The County should be willing to “blow the UGB” if a large employer would come to the County and provide a significant number of jobs. The County should advertise this opportunity to attract jobs that in turn support diverse housing.
- Remember that demands on infrastructure, created by increased density and urbanizing, go beyond roads, water, sewers and schools. Demands of social service agencies also increase.

How do we blend diverse housing styles?

- Recognize that the location of affordable housing may not always be “fair”, meaning that not everyone can afford to live where they want. That is the reality of income limitations.
- The County should work with the community and developers to design large (mile square) communities with diverse housing and associated job opportunities in the Urban Reserve Areas, because there are few opportunities for large development within many UBAs.

How do you deal with a community like Camas who has a large industrial base? Do you allow them to expand with lower densities because they can afford them?

- The participants were not sure how to deal with this issue.

Using a “tiered system” to provide a range of density rules for small, medium and large cities was discussed. This can result in the reverse of what you want in the end, with density increasing around the outside instead of at the center of a community. How do we address this?

- One participant responded that we need “Policies for “Growth Management” not “Growth Accommodation”, but the other noted that “management” should not mean “control.” The community’s goals should be identified and then management tools put in place to achieve those goals.

Other comments:

- Keep the workers in Clark County, not crossing the river for jobs. You need jobs to support the density and housing goals.